

Carroll, Rhonda

From: Ron Gitelman <rongitman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 10:46 AM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: Bicycle Safety law

H.B. 5403

Hello,

I am writing to give testimony regarding a bill currently before the General Assembly that would increase the fine for drivers who don't use care to avoid hitting a pedestrian or cyclist to as much as \$500.

I am a resident of the Westville Section of New Haven and also work in downtown New Haven. When the weather is appropriate I will either ride a bicycle or walk to work (about 3.5 miles each way) instead of driving. We live within a 5-10 minute walking distance to the school my children attend so walking is common in my family.

In the process of walking, whether to my childrens' school or to work, we have to cross up to several intersections that can be dangerous at times even though there are lights and walk signs. There have been many instances where drivers impatient with the length of the signal changes will turn left on red (from Vista Terrace to Fountain) or right on red (i.e. from Fountain onto Vista Terrace which is a no right on red with a sign) without regard to cyclists and pedestrians. My family or I have nearly been hit by these vehicles several times. It is for this reason my children are not allowed to walk to school on their own even though my oldest are 12 and 10 (ages when my parents would let me walk to school on my own). It is an issue of safety as well as common sense issue. It is important to me and my family that we can be sustainable in our transportation options with the utmost safety.

I read in an article in the Courant that industry reps are concerned about the definition of reasonable care. I believe there should be parameters for the definition. A driver should pay attention to crosswalks and surroundings even though they have right of way. Reasonable care should include not turning on red when not allowed, distracted driving, and not yielding when the opportunity is there.

I am available to provide more detail if necessary.

Thank You

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